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The Influence of Culture in Creative Strategy and Execution of International Advertising: A Content Analysis Approach

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Abstract

Since the advent of globalisation, advertisers are faced with a dilemma regarding whether to standardise or localise their advertising strategy. Both strategies present advantages and disadvantages, and the decision is strongly influenced by culture. This paper examines the impact of culture on international advertising from an ad content perspective by interpreting advertising messages and transcribing the embedded values on advertisements. Quantitative content analysis is used to infer a pattern of advertising practices for MNCs. Specifically the ads aired in the UK are compared to those in Malaysia in terms of creative strategy and execution and with locally produced ads in automotive, fast moving consumer goods and banks. Subsequently, the difference of the cultural values embedded in Malaysian ads against UK ads was evaluated. Findings indicate either a partial adaptation or full localisation strategy is necessary for advertising in the Malaysian market. When compared with a local competitor, the results showed a mixed outcome. For some MNCs, creative strategies applied were similar while some were different to those of local companies. Interestingly, the executional elements applied were different from locally produced ads for all MNCs. Findings suggest that more cultural cues were visible in MNC ads in Malaysia as compared to MNC ads which support the idea that culture does have an impact towards international advertising.

Keywords: advertising; content analysis; localise; standardise; culture; creative strategy; execution

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1. Introduction

Standardisation or localisation in international advertising depends primarily upon differentiating creative strategy from execution. Creative strategy is defined as "a policy or guiding principal that specifies the general nature and character of the messages" (Frazer, 1983, pp. 36). Creative strategies are represented by themes, main messages, positioning, and focal points (Parente, 2000). For example, MNCs usually develop creative strategies which are usually broad, general and could be accepted everywhere (such as Nike's "Just Do It", HSBC's "The Worlds Local Bank" and "BMW's "Sheer Driving Pleasure"). On the other hand, execution refers to a selection of advertising appeals, copy, and illustrations to execute the chosen creative strategy (Mueller, 2010). Picture selection, size, color, general layout, captioning, and use of text are major elements of execution (Whitelock and Chung, 1989). Execution involves specific strategies which are applied to ad copies, such as use of backgrounds, models and format to execute the concept.

The objective of this study is to test the current practice of advertising in Malaysia by analysing the extent of how MNCs in Malaysia differentiate their creative strategy and execution in comparison to the international advertising (in this case for the UK) copy produced by their headquarters. As defined above, creative strategy is relatively abstract and broad, and is suitable to be applied in many cultures. In contrast, execution which is used to execute the abstract creative strategy tends to use more tactical aspects such as using local models, local background, and local music. It is expected that there will be high degree of similarity or standardisation in terms of creative strategies. In comparison, it is expected that there is a high degree of differences or localisation in terms of execution as it is more culturally bound. In addition, both localised versions of MNCs ads and locally produced ads for local products are created based upon a similar market (i.e. Ford Malaysia compared with Proton, a local automaker in the same segment). Hence the two questions examined in this study are:

1. What are the similarities and differences of creative strategies and execution used in MNCs' advertisements in Malaysia and UK (for each brand)?
2. What are the similarities and differences of creative strategies and execution used in MNCs in Malaysia as compared to a comparable local Malaysian brand?

The debate between a standardised and a localised strategy in international advertising is mainly attributed to the impact of culture (James and Hill, 1991; Papavasiliou and Stathakopolous, 1997; Mueller, 2004). Studies have established that culture does influence, however, existing studies have not been able to explain to what extent culture influences the degree of standardisation in creative strategy and execution. In order to measure the degree of cultural differences, the amount of cultural cues embedded in advertising messages needs to be quantified. Cultural cues are information that contains explicit images, values, customs, icons, symbols, idioms, and characteristics of a culture. Cultural cues parallel information cues that help identify and classify information embedded in an advertisement (Resnik and Stern, 1977).

Previous studies investigating the influence of culture in international advertising from a Western perspective shows that advertising messages targeting foreign markets should adapt to the values and norms in that market (Mueller, 2004; Kanso, 1992). A study of US and Korean adverts indicated that cultural factors do have an impact towards advertising execution (Miracle, Chang and Taylor, 1992). Content analyses of American and Chinese advertising messages suggest that Chinese ads tended to use emotional appeals, indirect expressions, and symbolic values, while American ads were likely to use direct appeals, and both symbolic and utilitarian values (Chang and Schweitzer, 2001). Hence, it indicates that there is a pattern for Asian ads to have more cultural cues embedded in them as compared to ads from a Western country.

Since the UK represents a Western culture and Malaysia belongs to an Asian or non-Western culture, it is expected that there will be relatively higher cultural values embedded in Malaysian ads as compared to UK ads. The pattern of MNCs' current advertising practice in Malaysia in which the execution of MNC subsidiaries are different, and the difference might be due to culture. Therefore, this study aims to determine that more cultural cues are identified in MNCs' localised Malaysian ads (for each brand) as compared to MNCs' UK ads.

2. Content Analysis

In advertising research studies, content analysis can be applied to determine the presence of certain themes, values, executional elements (i.e. texts, ad copy background, models), and to quantify this presence in an objective manner. Statistically, the content analysis method can be used to test hypotheses of message characteristics, compare

media content, and assist in the study of media effects (Wimmer and Dominick, 1994). Thus, applying content analysis is suitable for this study, which aims to compare advertising content between Malaysia and the UK. Quantitative content analysis gives the exact count of the frequencies of certain chosen elements from an advertisement. This study utilises quantitative content analysis, which is a more suitable technique to compare media content in this research. This technique allows the researcher to reduce large sets of data into a more manageable form, and is consequently able to characterise the data variation with summary statistics such as percentages, averages, and ranges. The use of quantitative measures on data samples also permits the researcher to use statistical tools to test hypotheses and answer research questions (Riffe et al., 2005).

The content analysis approach involves determining the sample, sampling process, and data analysis procedure. Advertising content analysis is conducted using the following steps. The process begins with the formulation of research questions or hypotheses and ends with interpretations of the outcome. Table 1 provides a summary of the process of content analysis undertaken for this study.

Table 1: Summary of content analysis process

NO	STEP	PROCEDURE	MEASUREMENT
1	Define research hypothesis	Past research and literature review	
2	Coding Scheme	Define the operating definition of creative strategy Define the operating definition of execution strategy Define the operating definition of cultural cues	Simon's (1971) coding scheme Marketing Science Institute coding scheme cited by Schamalensee (1983) and Weinberger and Spotts (1989) Coding scheme for cultural cues adapted from Wei Ran and Jiang (2005).
3	Sampling process	284 ads were selected from two different sectors – automotive & fast moving consumer goods (FMCG). 95 ads from Malaysian MNC; ;67 UK MNC (67 ads), 122 ads of local Malaysian comparable companies within the same sector Automotive sector - BMW, Toyota and Ford FMCG sector - Kitkat, Nescafé, Pampers and Head & Shoulders.	Sample ads advertised in Malaysia and the UK from 2009 to 2010 Automotive and fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) selected as they represent the majority of the advertising expenditures in Malaysia. 2010.
4	Coding process	2 coders hired and trained on categories, category definitions and dimensions & agree consistently on the interpretation and application of the categories of advertisement creative strategy, executional formats and cultural cues, coders worked independently of each other. Disagreements among the coders were resolved via discussions with both coders and a third coder.	Coding procedures of Gilly (1988) and Schneider and Schneider (1979). Pilot study exercise which tested 30 ads & 20% of ads tested for inter-coder agreement on reliability by using Perreault and Leigh (1989) method. The inter-judge reliability for this study was 0.88 for Malaysia and 0.92 for UK ads, which was therefore satisfactory and acceptable based on Kassarjian's (1977) at inter-coder reliability which must reach or exceed a minimum of 0.80.
5	Data Analysis		Cross tabulation, Mean, Correlation

3. Findings

3.1. Creative strategies and execution used in advertisements in Malaysia and the UK for Automotive Sector

With reference to Table 2, crosstabulation on between-country comparisons of the frequencies of individual creative strategies suggests that BMW's advertisements in Malaysia and the UK are similar. The most frequently used creative strategies in both countries were 'motivation with psychological appeal' and 'information'. Correlation between the two sets of strategies was high with Spearman's rho correlation (rs) - .718, $p<.001$ indicating similar creative strategies in the BMW ads in Malaysia and UK. However, BMW's ads in Malaysia and UK had significant different in terms of execution for 'product', 'presenter', 'visual' and 'music'. Specifically, 'product displays' were used more frequently in Malaysia (96.3%) than in UK (50%). 'Scenic beauty' was used more frequently in UK (34.1%) than in Malaysia (18.4%). In sum, BMW creative strategies are standardised, while execution is localised.

Results indicate Ford ads in Malaysia and UK are similar in terms of creative strategies ($rs =.664$, $p<.05$). The most frequently used creative strategies in both counties were 'motivation with psychological appeal' and 'information'. Ford's advertisements in Malaysia and the UK are different in terms of execution for 'presenter' and 'visual'. 'Presenter' was used more frequently in Malaysia (100%) than in UK (40%). 'Scenic beauty' was used more frequently in Malaysia (100%), while 'fantasy' is more frequently used in UK (80%) as visuals. As compared to BMW, scenic beauty was used more in the Ford ads; this might be due to the different target groups of these two carmakers. The researcher believes that BMW is focusing on highlighting the capability of the cars itself and thus

portrays more realistic features of the cars. Meanwhile, Ford is focusing on the car as a transportation that is fun to drive. Thus, in enhancing this feature more scenic beauty background is portrayed to show that the cars can be driven in various terrains. In sum, results indicate that Ford creative strategies is standardised, while execution is localised.

Table 2: Frequency distribution of creative strategies and execution in Malaysia and the UK for the automotive sector

Company	**BMW**				**Ford**				**Toyota**			
	Malaysia		**UK**		**Malaysia**		**UK**		**Malaysia**		**UK**	
Creative Strategies*	**(n) 27**	**%**	**(n) 14**	**%**	**(n) 7**	**%**	**(n) 5**	**%**	**(n) 17**	**%**	**(n) 14**	**%**
Motivation w Psychological	24	89.9	14	100.0	7	100.0	4	80.0	6	35.3	11	78.6
Information	17	63.0	6	42.9	2	28.6	3	60.0	14	82.4	9	64.3
Symbolic Association	1	3.7	2	14.3	2	28.6	0	0.0	3	17.6	0	0.0
Habit Starting	1	3.7	0	0.0	1	0.0	1	20.0	5	29.4	0	0.0
Brand Familiarisation	0	0.0	3	21.4	7	100.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	3	21.4
Repeated Assertion	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	0	0
Obligation	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	7.1
Execution	*Correlation (rs) .718 , p<.001 (2-tailed)*				*Correlation (rs) .664, p <. .05 (2-tailed)*				*Correlation (rs) .408, p = .213 (2-tailed)*			
Format												
Story	25	92.6	11	78.6	7	100.0	5	100.0	16	94.1	8	57.1
Drama	0	0.0	1	7.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Slice of life	1	3.7	1	7.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	5	35.1
Analogy	0	0.0	1	7.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	7.1
Others	1	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Product	*Chi-square =4.806, d.f=4, p=.308*								*Chi-square = 6.1, d.f = 2, p < .05*			
Product Display	26	96.3	7	50.0	7	100.0	4	80.0	14	82.4	10	71.4
Demonstration of pd	0	0.0	7	50.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	2	11.8	4	28.6
No display of product	1	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	0	0.0
Presenter	*Chi-square=16.474, d.f=2, p<.001*				*Fisher's exact test, p = .417*				*Chi-square = 2.062, d.f = 2, p = .357*			
Subtitle	27	100.0	10	14.3	7	100.0	2	40.0	16	94.1	5	35.7
Voiceover	0	0.0	2	14.3	0	0.0	1	20.0	1	5.9	8	57.1
No presenter	0	0.0	2	71.4	0	0.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	1	7.1
Model Portrayal	*Chi-square=8.548, d.f=2, p<.05*				*Chi-square = 5.6, d.f = 2, p < .05*				*Chi-square = 12.029, d.f = 2, p < .01*			
No model	27	100.0	13	97.6	7	100.0	4	80.0	11	64.7	8	57.1
Enjoy/adventure	0	0.0	1	2.4	0	0.0	1	20.0	6	35.3	5	35.7
Successful	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	7.1
Visual	*Fisher's exact test, p=.341*				*Fisher's exact test, p = .417*				*Chi-square=1.286, d.f = 2, p = .526*			
Realistic	16	59.3	4	28.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	17.6	6	42.9
Fantasy / surreal	7	25.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	80.0	11	64.7	3	21.4
Scenic beauty	4	14.8	10	71.4	7	100.0	1	20.0	2	11.8	4	28.6
Cartoon / Animation	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	7.1
Others	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	0	0.0
Music	*Chi-square=14.063, d.f=2, p<.001*				*Fisher's exact test, p < .05*				*Chi-square = 8.023, d.f = 4, p = .091*			
No music	27	100.0	11	78.6	7	100.0	3	60.0	16	94.1	5	35.7
Used but not major	0	0.0	3	21.4	0	0.0	1	20.0	1	5.9	6	42.9
Major element	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	3	21.4
Humour	*Fisher's exact test, p<.05*				*Chi-square = 3.6, d.f = 2, p = .186*				*Chi-square = 12.157, d.f = 2, p < .01*			
No humour	27	100.0	14	100.0	7	100.0	5	100.0	17	100.0	14	100.0
Satire	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Slapstick	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sex												
Not used	27	100.0	14	100.0	7	100.0	5	100.0	16	94.1	14	100.0
Attraction	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	0	100.0
									Fisher's exact test, p = .548			

** More than one creative strategy can be used in a single ad*

In contrast to BMW and Ford, Toyota ads in Malaysia and UK differ in terms of creative strategies. The most frequently used creative strategy in Malaysia was 'information', while in the UK was 'motivation with psychological appeal', while Malaysian ads used more 'habit starting' strategy. The correlation between the two sets of strategies was low (rs = .408, p=.213) indicating different creative strategies in Ford ads between Malaysia and UK. Toyota's ads in Malaysia and UK are different in terms of execution for 'format', 'presenter' and 'music'.

Specifically, 'story format' were used more frequently in Malaysia (94.1%) than in UK (57.1%). In addition, 'subtitle' was more widely used as a presenter in Malaysia (94.1%) while 'voiceover' was used more frequently in UK (35.7%). 'Fantasy' is more frequently used in UK (80%) as visuals. Music elements were more frequently used in UK (78.6%) as compared to Malaysia (5.9%). Significant use of musical elements in the UK ads might partly be due to the enhanced fantasy elements in their creative strategy. In sum, results indicate that Toyota creative strategies and execution are both localised.

With reference to Table 3, crosstabulation suggests that Kitkat's ads in Malaysia and UK are similar in terms of creative strategies. All Kitkat ads used in both countries contained 'symbolic association' indicating similar creative strategies. However, Kitkat's ads are different in terms of execution for 'presenter', 'music' and 'humour'. Specifically, more voiceover was used in Malaysia (100%) as compared to UK (40%). Malaysia used more 'slapstick humour', while UK used more 'ludicrous' humour. The difference in terms of humour used clearly indicates that humour is not universal and depends on the cultural background of the target market. From a Malaysian cultural perspective, the use of humour must be used carefully, as humour can be very subjective and might be interpreted differently by the viewers. If interpreted negatively it might be damaging to the brand image. In sum, the results indicate that Kitkat's creative strategies are standardised, while execution is localised.

Similarly Nescafé's ads in Malaysia and UK are also different in terms of creative strategies. Nescafé Malaysia used mostly 'argument' and information', while Nescafé UK's were predominantly 'information' ($rs = -1.00$, $p<.01$) indicating different creative strategies in the Nescafé ads in Malaysia and UK. Nescafé's ads in Malaysia and UK are also different in terms of execution. in three categories; 'presenter', 'model' and 'visual'. Celebrities were used more frequently in Malaysia (50%), and a realistic visual scene was more frequently used as compared to fantasy visuals in the UK. It appears that portrayal of 'enjoy/adventure' activities were used frequently in Malaysia (83.3%) than in UK (28.6%). In sum, the results indicate that Nescafé creative strategies and execution are both localised.

On the other hand, Pampers's ads in Malaysia and UK are similar in terms of creative strategies. The most frequently used in both Malaysia and UK were 'argument' and 'information'. The correlation between the two sets of strategies was high ($rs =.718$, $p<.001$) indicating similar creative strategies in the Pampers ads in Malaysia and UK. Pampers's ads in Malaysia and UK are different in terms of execution showing significant differences in two categories; 'product' and 'music'. In sum, results indicate that Pampers's creative strategy is standardised, while execution is localised. H&S's ads in Malaysia and UK are similar in terms of creative strategies ($rs = .980$, $p<.00$). The most frequently used in both Malaysia and UK were 'argument' and 'imitation' appeals. H&S's ads in Malaysia and UK are different in terms of execution for 'format', 'product', 'model portrayal', 'visual', 'music' and 'humour'. In sum, the results indicate that H&S's creative strategies are standardised, while execution is localised.

3.3. Comparison of ad campaigns for MNCs in Malaysia vs. local Malaysian companies for Automotive sector

In Table 5, there were similarities and differences of creative strategies and execution used between MNCs in Malaysia and a local Malaysian brand in the automotive category. Proton was selected as the local Malaysian brand because Proton is Malaysia's leading automotive manufacturer with the highest number of cars sold. In addition, Proton's advertising expenditure is among the highest in the sector. Results suggest that MNCs' ads in Malaysia are similar to local brand in terms of creative strategies. The creative strategies correlation between Proton and BMW ($rs =.848$, $p<.01$), Proton and Ford ($rs =.765$, $p< .01$), and Proton and Toyota ($rs =.814$, $p < .01$) was high. Significant differences were obtained in "product", "presenter", "model portrayal" and "visual". Overall, comparisons in the automotive sector (BMW, Ford, Toyota) clearly indicates that car companies usually use information and psychological appeal as their creative strategy. Generally, information is used to show the capability and features of the car, while psychological appeal generally shows how driving the car would enhance the image of the owner.

From the analysis, it can be seen that Proton also applies the same strategy for their cars. This is not surprising, given that Proton is a relatively new company when compared with the other three brands. Being the late movers in the industry, Proton has a tendency to emulate strategies that were successfully implemented by the other leaders. In addition, the researcher believed that this is a global trend. Nevertheless, the execution strategy portrays a different scenario, where each brand uses a different localisation approach to enhance the attractiveness of their ads. For instance, some companies focus on showing more pictures of the cars, some focus of showing a vibrant scenic background, while some focus on humour. In conclusion, results indicate that the creative strategies of BMW, Ford and Toyota are similar to the Malaysian local automotive brand, Proton. Meanwhile, the execution of BMW, Ford and Toyota is significantly different from Proton in most execution variables.

3.2. Creative strategies and execution used in advertisements in Malaysia and the UK for Fast Moving Consumer Goods Sector

Table 3: Frequency distribution of creative strategies and execution in Malaysia and the UK for the FMCG Sector

Company	**KitKat**				**Nescafe**				**Pampers**				**H&S**			
	Malaysia		**UK**		**Malaysia**		**UK**		**Malaysia**		**UK**		**Malaysia**		**UK**	
Creative Strategies*	**(n) 6**	**%**	**(n) 5**	**%**	**(n) 6**	**%**	**(n) 7**	**%**	**(n) 9**	**%**	**(n) 6**	**%**	**(n) 7**	**%**	**(n) 4**	**%**
Motivation w Psycho	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Information	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	66.7	7	100.0	1	11.1	1	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Symbolic Association	6	100.0	5	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Habit Starting	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Brand Familiarisation	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Argument	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	100.0	1	14.3	8	88.9	5	83.3	7	100	4	100.0
Imitation	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	71.4	4	100.0
Execution					*Correlation (rs) -1 .00 , p<.01 (2-tailed)*				*Correlation (rs) 1 .000 , p<.01 (2-tailed)*				*Correlation (rs) 0.980 , p<.01 (2-tailed)*			
Format																
Story	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	100.0	7	100.	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Drama	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Slice of life	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Analogy	6	100.0	5	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Problem/Solution	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	88.9	5	83.3	7	100.0	0	0.0
Others	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Product									*Chi-Square = 2.179, d.f=2, p<.336*				*Fisher's exact test, p<.01*			
Product Display	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Demonstr of pd	6	100.0	5	100.0	6	100.0	7	100.0	2	22.2	6	100.0	7	100.0	0	0.0
Product compare	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	77.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
No display of pd	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Presenter									*Fisher's exact test, p<.01*				*Fisher's exact test, p<.01*			
Subtitle	0	0.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Voiceover	6	100.0	3	60.0	2	33.3	7	100.0	6	66.7	6	100.0	2	28.6	4	100.0
Celebrities	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	50.0	0	0.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	2	28.6	0	0.0
Ordinary person	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	16.0	0	0.0	2	22.2	0	0.0	3	42.9	0	0.0
No presenter	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Model Portrayal	*Chi-Square = 4.95, d.f=1, p<.05*				*Chi-Square = 6.741, d.f=2, p<.05*				*Chi-Square = 2.500, d.f=2, p=.287*				*Chi-Square = 5.238, d.f=2, p=.073*			
No model	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	16.7	4	57.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Enjoy/adventure	6	100.0	5	100.0	5	83.3	1	14.3	3	33.3	3	50.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Successful	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	28.6	3	33.3	1	16.7	7	100.0	0	0.0
Convenient	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	33.3	2	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Visual					*Chi-Square = 6.428, d.f=2, p<.05*				*Chi-Square = 0.625, d.f=2, p=.732*				*Fisher's exact test, p<.01*			
Realistic	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	100.0	0	0.0	9	100.0	6	100.0	7	100.0	0	0.0
Fantasy / surreal	6	100.0	5	100.0	0	0.0	7	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Scenic beauty	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Music					*Fisher's exact test, p<.05*								*Fisher's exact test, p<.01*			
No music	4	66.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Minor element	2	33.3	5	100.0	6	100.0	7	100.0	4	44.4	6	100.0	7	100.0	0	0.0
Major element	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	55.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Humour	*Chi-Square = 5.238, d.f=1, p<.05*				*Fisher's exact test, p=.462*				*Fisher's exact test, p<.05*				*Fisher's exact test, p<.01*			
No humour	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	83.3	7	100.0	9	100.0	6	100.0	7	100.0	0	0.0
Satire	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Slapstick	4	66.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Ludicrous	2	33.3	5	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	100.0
Joke	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sex	*Chi-Square = 7.639, d.f=1, p<.05*												*Fisher's exact test, p<.01*			
Not used	6	100.0	5	100.0	6	100.0	7	100.0	9	100.0	6	100.0	7	100.0	4	100.0
Attraction	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

** More than one creative strategy can be used in a single ad*

Table 5: Frequency distribution of creative strategies and execution for Malaysia MNCs ads and local comparable brand (Proton) in the automotive sector

	BRAND											
Creative Strategies*	**BMW Malaysia**		**Proton**		**Ford Malaysia**		**Proton**		**Toyota Malaysia**		**Proton**	
	(n) 27	**%**	**(n)** 51	**%**	**(n)** 7	**%**	**(n)** 51	**%**	**(n)** **17**	**%**	**(n)** 51	**%**
Information	17	63.0	28	54.9	7	100.0	28	54.9	14	82.4	28	54.9
Argument	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Motivation w psycho	24	88.9	4	7.8	2	28.6	4	7.8	6	35.3	4	7.8
Repeated assertion	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	0	0.0
Brand familiarization	0	0.0	2	3.9	0	0.0	2	3.9	0	0.0	2	3.9
Symbolic association	1	3.7	18	35.3	0	0.0	18	35.3	3	17.6	18	35.3
Imitation	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Obligation	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.0
Habit-starting	1	3.7	4	7.8	2	28.6	4	7.8	5	29.4	4	7.8
		Correlation (rs) .898, p < .01 (2-tailed)				*Correlation (rs) .765, p < .01 (2-tailed)*				*Correlation (rs) .814, p < .01 (2-tailed)*		
Execution												
Format												
Story	25	92.6	48	94.1	7	100.0	48	94.1	16	94.1	48	94.1
Drama	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Slice of life	1	3.7	3	5.9	0	0.0	3	5.9	1	5.9	3	5.9
Analogy	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Others	1	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Product					*Chi-square = 3.366, d.f = 6, p = .762*							
No product display	1	3.7	17	33.3	0	0.0	17	33.3	1	5.9	17	33.3
Demonstration of product	0	0.0	2	3.9	0	0.0	2	3.9	2	11.8	2	3.9
Product display	26	96.3	27	52.9	7	100.0	27	52.9	14	82.4	27	52.9
Others	0	0.0	5	9.8	0	0.0	5	9.8	0	0.0	5	9.8
Presenter					*Chi-square = 26.689, d.f = 9, p < .05*							
No presenter	0	0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.0
Celebrities	0	0.0	8	15.7	0	0.0	8	15.7	0	0.0	8	15.7
Ordinary person	0	0.0	9	17.6	0	0.0	9	17.6	0	0.0	9	17.6
Voiceover	0	0.0	2	3.9	0	0.0	2	3.9	1	5.9	2	3.9
Subtitle	27	100.0	31	60.8	7	100.0	31	60.8	16	94.1	31	60.8
Model portrayal					*Chi-square = 24.173, d.f = 12, p < .05*							
No model	27	100.0	30	58.8	6	85.7	30	58.8	11	64.7	30	58.8
Successful	0	0.0	3	5.9	0	0.0	3	5.9	0	0.0	3	5.9
Harmonic	0	0.0	11	21.6	0	0.0	11	21.6	0	0.0	11	21.6
Cooperative	0	0.0	2	3.9	0	0.0	2	3.9	0	0.0	2	3.9
Enjoy/adventure	0	0.0	5	9.8	1	14.3	5	9.8	6	35.3	5	9.8
Visual					*Chi-square = 34.102, d.f = 12, p < .05*							
None	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.0
Realistic	16	59.3	31	60.8	0	0.0	31	60.8	3	17.6	31	60.8
Fantasy or surreal	7	25.9	16	31.4	0	0.0	16	31.4	11	64.7	16	31.4
Scenic beauty	4	14.8	2	3.9	7	100.0	2	3.9	2	11.8	2	3.9
Cartoon animation	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.0
Others	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	0	0.0
Music					*Chi-square = 68.804, d.f = 15, p < .001*							
No music	27	100.0	46	90.2	7	100.0	46	90.2	16	94.1	46	90.2
Major element	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Used but no major	0	0.0	5	9.8	0	0.0	5	9.8	1	5.9	5	9.8
Humour					*Chi-square = 3.542, d.f = 3, p = 0.315*							
No humour	27	100.0	43	84.3	7	100.0	43	84.3	17	100.0	43	84.3
Satire	0	0.0	7	13.7	0	0.0	7	13.7	0	0.0	7	13.7
Slapstick	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.0
Sex					*Chi-square = 8.681, d.f = 6, p = .192*							
Not used	27	100.0	51	100.0	7	100.0	51	100.0	16	94.1	51	100.0
Attraction	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	0	0.0
					Chi-square = 5.05, d.f = 3, p = .168							

** More than one creative strategy can be used in a single ad*

3.4. Fast Moving Consumer Goods Sector

Results in Table 6 show that Malaysia's Kitkat ads are very different in terms of creative strategies focusing on 'symbolic association' while most Malaysian brands used 'information' strategy. Statistically it is proven by a negative correlation (rs = -.791, p = .111). Significant differences were found for 'format', 'product', 'visual' and 'humour'. In conclusion, results indicate that both Kitkat's creative strategies and executional strategy are different when compared to local Malaysian brands.

Table 6: Frequency distribution of creative strategies and execution for Malaysia MNCs ads and local comparable brand in the FMCG Sector

Product Group	**Chocolate**				**Coffee**				**Diapers**				**Shampoo**			
	KitKat Malaysia		**Chocolate**		**Nescafe Malaysia**		**Coffee**		**Pampers Malaysia**		**MamyPoko**		**H&S Malaysia**		**FollowMe**	
Creative Strategies*	**(n) 6**	**%**	**(n) 9**	**%**	**(n) 6**	**%**	**(n) 11**	**%**	**(n) 9**	**%**	**(n) 6**	**%**	**(n) 7**	**%**	**(n) 11**	**%**
Information	0	0.0	6	66.7	4	66.7	9	81.8	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
Argument	0	0.0	1	11.1	6	100.0	6	54.5	8	88.9	6	100.0	7	100.0	0	0.0
Motivation w psycho	0	0.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Brand familiarization	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	72.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Symbolic association	6	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Imitation	0	0.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	71.4	0	0.0
	Correlation (rs) - .791, p= .111 (2-tailed)				*Correlation (rs) - .500, p= .667 (2-tailed)*				*Correlation (rs) 1.000, p< .01 (2-tailed)*				*Correlation (rs) - .866, p= .333 (2-tailed)*			
Execution																
Format																
Story	0	0.0	8	88.9	6	100.0	11	100.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	100.0
Slice of life	0	0.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Analogy	6	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Problem/Solution	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	88.9	6	100.0	7	100.0	0	0.0
Product	*Chi-square = 15.000, d.f = 2, p < .001*								*Fisher's exact test, p =1.000*				*Fisher's exact test, p <.001*			
Demonstration of pd	6	100.0	3	33.3	6	100.0	4	36.4	2	22.2	6	100.0	7	100.0	2	18.2
Product display	0	0.0	6	66.7	0	0.0	1	9.1	7	77.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	81.8
Product comparison	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	54.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Presenter	*Fisher's exact test, p < .05*				*Chi-square = 6.491, d.f = 2, p < .05*				*Fisher's exact test, p <.01*				*Fisher's exact test, p <.01*			
No presenter	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Celebrities	0	0.0	1	11.0	3	50.0	2	18.2	1	11.0	0	0.0	2	28.6	0	0.0
Ordinary person	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	16.7	0	0.0	2	22.2	0	0.0	3	42.9	0	0.0
Voiceover	6	100.0	8	88.9	2	33.3	6	54.5	6	66.7	0	0.0	2	28.6	11	100.0
Subtitle	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Puppet	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Others	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Model portrayal	*Fisher's exact test, p =1.000*				*Chi-square = 5.177, d.f = 5, p = .395*				*Chi-square = 15.000, d.f = 3, p < .01*				*Chi-square = 10.879, d.f = 2, p < .01*			
No model	0	0.0	2	22.2	1	16.7	5	45.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	27.3
Successful	0	0.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	33.3	0	0.0	7	100.0	2	18.2
Enjoy/adventure	6	100.0	5	55.6	5	83.3	6	54.5	3	33.3	6	100.0	0	0.0	6	54.5
Convenient	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Others	0	0.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Visual	*Chi-square = 3.636, d.f = 3, p = .304*				*Fisher's exact test, p =.333*				*Chi-square = 6.667, d.f = 2, p < .05*				*Chi-square = 11.455, d.f = 2, p < .01*			
Realistic	0	0.0	3	33.3	6	100.0	9	81.8	9	100.0	0	0.0	7	100.0	8	72.7
Fantasy or surreal	6	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	18.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	9.1
Scenic beauty	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Cartoon animation	0	0.0	6	66.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	100.0	0	0.0	2	18.2
Music	*Chi-square = 15.000, d.f = 2, p < .001*				*Fisher's exact test, p =.515*				*Fisher's exact test, p <.001*				*Chi-square = 2.291, d.f = 2, p = .318*			
No music	4	66.7	3	33.3	0	0.0	3	27.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Major element	0	0.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	4	36.4	5	55.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Used but no major	2	33.3	5	55.6	6	100.0	4	36.4	4	44.4	6	100.0	7	100.0	11	100.0
Humour	*Chi-square = 1.905, d.f = 2, p = .386*				*Chi-square = 6.491, d.f = 2, p < .05*				*Fisher's exact test, p <.05*							
No humour	0	0.0	5	55.6	5	83.3	5	45.5	9	100.0	6	100.0	7	100.0	11	100.0
Joke	0	0.0	1	11.1	1	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Ludicrous	1	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Slapstick	5	83.3	1	11.1	0	0.0	6	54.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Other	0	0.0	2	22.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sex	*Chi-square = 11.5284, d.f = 4, p < .05*				*Chi-square = 6.053, d.f = 2, p < .05*									
Not used	6	100.0	9	100.0	6	100.0	11	100.0	9	100.0	6	100.0	7	100.0	8	83.3
Attraction	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	16.7
													Fisher's exact test, p =.245	

Nescafé's ads in Malaysia are different in terms of creative strategies using more 'argument' (100%), while Nescafé UK used more 'information' (81.8%) and 'brand familiarisation' (72.7%) with rs =-.500, p < .667. In terms of execution, Nescafé and local coffee brands show significant differences for 'product', 'music' and 'humour'. In conclusion, results indicate that Nescafé creative strategies and execution, as compared to local coffee brands, are significantly different. Pampers and a local Malaysian brand, Mamy Poko, suggests that they are similar in terms of creative strategies. Both Pampers and Mamy Poko use 'argument' strategy. Rs= 1.00, p < .01) was high. Pampers and local brands show significant differences in execution strategies using 'product', 'presenter', 'model portrayal', 'visual' and 'music'. In conclusion, results indicate that Pampers's creative strategy is similar to Mamy Poko, but the execution strategy is significantly different. H&S when compared with a local shampoo brand (FollowMe) revealed that H&S's ads in Malaysia are different in terms of creative strategies with emphasis on 'argument' (100%) and 'imitation', while FollowMe used more 'information' (100%) with negative rs =-.866, p < .333. Executing strategies between H&S and FollowMe show significant differences in five 'format', 'product', 'presenter' and 'model portrayal'. In conclusion, results indicate that H&S's creative strategies and execution as compared to local shampoo brands are significantly different.

Next mean and frequency analyses are used to determine the extent of cultural cues embedded in the MNCs Malaysia and MNCs UK ads (for each individual brand). Results for the number of cultural cues embedded in the Automotive sector are presented in Table 7 while for FMCG are presented in Table 8.

Table 7: Mean and frequency analysis of cultural cues in the automotive sector

MEAN ANALYSIS	**BMW**		**Ford**		**Toyota**	
	Malaysia n = 27	**UK n = 14**	**Malaysia n = 7**	**UK n = 5**	**Malaysia n = 17**	**UK n = 14**
Mean	2.5926	1.2143	2.5714	1.4000	3.1765	1.0714
Std. Deviation	.54772	.54772	.5352	.54772	1.5904	.2673
	t=3.406, d.f=39, p<.01		*t=3.706, d.f=10, p<.01*		*t=4.882, d.f=29,p<.001*	

FREQUENCY ANALYSIS												
Number of cultural cues in an advert	**Malaysia**		**UK**		**Malaysia**		**UK**		**Malaysia**		**UK**	
	#	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**
1	6	22.2	12	85.7	0	0.0	3	60.0	1	5.9	13	92.9
2	10	37.0	1	7.1	3	42.9	2	40.0	7	41.2	1	7.1
3	4	14.8	1	7.1	4	57.1	0	0.0	3	17.6	0	0.0
4	5	18.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	11.8	0	0.0
5	1	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	17.6	0	0.0
6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
7	1	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	0	0.0
Total	27	100.0	14	100.0	7	100.0	5	100.0	27	100.0	14	100.0

With reference to Table 7, in the automotive category, mean cultural cues for BMW's pooled sample was 2.12. BMW's UK ads averaged 1.21 cultural cues, significantly fewer than BMW's Malaysian ads of 2.59 (t = 3.406, p< .01). However cultural cues for Malaysian samples had 77.7% and two to seven cultural cues, as compared to 14.2% in the U.K sample. These results suggest that culture has a greater influence on advertisements in Malaysia as compared to the UK. Mean for cultural cues for Ford's pooled sample was 2.08. Ford's UK ads averaged 1.40 cultural cues, significantly fewer than Ford's Malaysian ads of 2.57 (t = 3.706, p< .01). Frequency of cultural cues shows that more than half of Malaysian sample (57.1%) has more than three cues, as compared to none in the U.K sample. These results suggest that culture has a greater influence on advertisements in Malaysia as compared to the UK. Mean cultural cues for Toyota's pooled sample was 2.22. Toyota's UK ads averaged 1.07 cultural cues, significantly fewer than Toyota's Malaysian ads of 3.17 (t = 4.882, < .001). Frequency of cultural cues show that more than half of the Malaysian sample (52.9%) has three to five cultural cues, as compared to none in the UK sample. These results suggest that culture has a greater influence on advertisements in Malaysia as compared to the UK. Results indicate more cultural cues are identified in MNCs' localised Malaysian ads as compared to MNCs'

UK ads for the automotive sector.

Table 8: Mean and frequency analysis of cultural ues in the FMCG sector

MEAN ANALYSIS	**Kitkat**		**Nescafe**		**Pampers**		**Head & Shoulders**	
	Malaysia n = 6	**UK n = 5**	**Malaysia n = 6**	**UK n = 7**	**Malaysia n = 9**	**UK n = 6**	**Malaysia n = 7**	**UK n = 4**
Mean	2.6667	1.000	2.1667	0.3333	1.4444	1.000	2.000	2.000
Std. Deviation	.5164	.0000	1.1691	.5345	.5271	.0000	.0000	.0000
	t=7.151, d.f=9, p<.001		*t=3.544, d.f=11, p<.005*		*t=7.151, d.f=9, p<.001*		*t=4.882, d.f=29,p<.001*	
FREQUENCY ANALYSIS	**Malaysia**	**UK**	**Malaysia**	**UK**	**Malaysia**	**UK**	**Malaysia**	**UK**
Number of cultural cues	**# %**	**# %**	**# %**	**# %**	**# %**	**# %**	**# %**	**# %**
1	0 0.0	5 100	2 33.3	4 57.1	5 55.6	6 100	0 0.0	0 0.0
2	2 33.3	0 0.0	2 33.3	3 42.9	4 44.4	0 0.0	7 100	4 100
3	4 66.7	0 0.0	1 16.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0
4	0 0.0	0 0.0	1 16.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0
Total	6 100	5 100	6 100	7 100	9 100	6 100	7 100	4 100

Results in Table 8 show that mean number of cultural cues for Kitkat's pooled sample was 1.90. Kitkat's UK ads averaged 1.00 cultural cues, significantly fewer than Kitkat's Malaysian ads of 2.67 (t = 7.151, p< .001). Meanwhile, results of between-country comparison of the frequency of cultural cues show that most of the Malaysian samples (66.7%) have three cues as compared to only one cultural cue for the UK ads. These results suggest that culture has a greater influence on advertisements in Malaysia as compared to the UK. The mean number of cultural cues for Nescafé's pooled sample was 1.23. Nescafé's UK ads averaged 0.33 cultural cues, which is significantly fewer than Nescafé's Malaysian ads of 2.17 (t = 3.544, p< .005). Meanwhile, results of between-country comparison of the frequency of cultural cues show that in most of the Malaysian samples (66.7%) have more than two cues, as compared to none in the U.K sample. These results suggest that culture has a greater influence on advertisements in Malaysia as compared to the UK.

The mean number of cultural cues for Pamper's pooled sample was 1.67. Pampers's UK ads averaged 1.00 cultural cues, which is significantly fewer than Pampers's Malaysian ads of 1.44 (t = 7.151, p< .001). Meanwhile, results of between-country comparison of the frequency of cultural cues show that in the Malaysian sample less than half (44.4%) of the ads have more than one cue, as compared to none in the U.K sample. These results suggest that culture has a slightly higher influence on advertisements in Malaysia as compared to the UK. Nevertheless, the number of cultural cues seen in this product is lower. This might be due to the fact that popular features for baby products might be universal (i.e. caring, love).The mean number of cultural cues for H&S's pooled sample was 2.00. Meanwhile, results of between-country comparison of the frequency of cultural cues show that in the H & S's UK ads averaged 2.00 cultural cues, while the H&S Malaysian ads averaged 2.00. These results suggest that culture has no more influence on advertisements in Malaysia than it has in the UK. Thus, H1 was rejected for H&S ads. This might be due to the fact that popular features for shampoo products might be universal (i.e. clean, fresh).

4. Discussion

Table 9 summarises the advertising strategies applied by MNCs in the Malaysian market. In conclusion, the outcome varies according to individual MNCs. Statistically, BMW, Ford, Kitkat, Pampers and H&S applied an adaptation strategy (standardised creative strategy and localised execution), while Toyota and Nescafé applied a full localisation approach (both localised creative strategy and execution). Findings clearly indicate that either an adaptation or full localisation strategy is necessary for advertising in the Malaysian market.

Findings support previous studies of the differentiation between creative strategy and execution, which pointed out that a creative strategy can be standardised, while execution are usually adapted to the local environment (Duncan and Ramaprasad, 1995; Koudelova and Whitelock, 2001). More importantly, the findings supports the idea of either an adaptation (standardised creative strategy, localised execution) or a full localisation strategy. Eger (1987) suggested that differences in execution could be designed to reflect the culture of a given market.

Table 10 provides the summary of advertising strategies applied by MNCs as compared to local brand. To further explore MNC strategies in Malaysia, their ads were compared with local comparable brand within the same sector. Results show a mixed outcome, whereby creative strategies applied by MNCs were similar to those of local

brands for BMW, Ford, Toyota and Pampers, while creative strategies applied were different for Kitkat, Nescafé and H&S. Although a localised execution approach was applied by all MNCs, it clearly indicates that the executional elements applied were different from locally produced ads. Of interest to marketers are the interpretations of culture which are contrasting between MNCs and local companies. It is interesting to be able to gauge why MNCs prefer a particular cultural element over another.

Table 9: Summary of the strategies applied by MNCs in the Malaysian market

Sector	MNCs	Creative Strategy	Execution
Automotive	BMW	Standardisation	Localisation
	Ford	Standardisation	Localisation
	Toyota	Localisation	Localisation
FMCG	KitKat	Standardisation	Localisation
	Nescafé	Localisation	Localisation
	Pampers	Standardisation	Localisation
	H&S	Standardisation	Localisation

Table 10: Advertising strategies applied by MNCs as compared to local brands (MNC Malaysia vs. Local Malaysian Brand)

Sector	Brand Pairing		Advertising Strategy	
	MNCs	Local company	Creative Strategy	Execution
Automotive	BMW	Proton	Similar	Different
	Ford	Proton	Similar	Different
	Toyota	Proton	Similar	Different
FMCG	KitKat	Chocolate	Different	Different
	Nescafé	Coffee	Different	Different
	Pampers	Mamy Poko	Similar	Different
	H&S	Shampoo	Different	Different

Findings in this study imply that the effectiveness of a particular ad campaign is very much related to specific elements of culture (i.e. norms, aesthetic, religion). In a way, in different cultures, different cultural elements would seem more appealing as compared to others. For instance, in Malaysia aesthetical cultural elements (i.e. colours, numbers) might be effective, but the same element might not work in another Southeast Asian culture such as Thailand or the Philippines. This provides a gap for future research into this area.

Table 11: Summary of the mean of cultural cues (MNC Malaysia vs MNC UK)

Sector	Company	MNC Adsin Malaysia Cultural Cues (Mean)	MNC Ads in UK Cultural Cues (Mean)	Local company Cultural Cues (Mean)
Automotive	BMW	2.59	1.21	2.55
	Ford	3.18	1.07	2.55
	Toyota	2.57	1.40	2.55
FMCG	KitKat	2.67	1.00	1.33
	Nescafé	2.17	0.33	2.16
	Pampers	1.44	1.00	2.00
	H&S	2.00	1.00	2.45

On the analysis of cultural cues embedded in MNCs localised ads as compared to MNCs foreign ads, cultural cue constructs were formed to investigate the impact of culture on MNCs' international advertising. Results in Table 11 suggest that more cultural cues were visible in MNC ads in Malaysia as compared to MNC ads in the UK. In addition, it shows that the level of cultural cues used in MNCs' Malaysian ads were at a similar level with locally produced ads. This strongly suggests that culture does have an impact towards international advertising.

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